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- I am protesting parcels NM-2014-001, 004 through 015, which are in the Rio Chama Watershed and East of the Continental Divide.

I am an 80-year-old retired career basic scientist who planned to spend the rest of my life in the Brazos Valley of Texas and was forced to move because of the destruction of the quality of the air that was threatening my health. I am not alone. Large segments of the American people are becoming homeless or mobile. It is excellent business for the travel trailer parks, but not for building healthy productive communities.

I lived in this location in Texas for 35 years, and invested much of my life savings in four pieces of property in Texas. When I arrived in Texas the air was always as crystalline as that in northern New Mexico on a good day like today. When I left, the air was consistently, daily, gray with a dank smog that damaged my lungs and other organs.

This fug is still there on most days, over the entire region of the hill country and eastward, and up to about 200 feet elevation, and of course it continues to get worse as all those wells leak, many spill (I was threatened when I photographed effluent being poured into the local creek). This change took (for the worst of it) about 5 years and was very clearly, the most of it, the result of intensive fracking north of us.

In addition, of course, I know many other people who owned land and homes in the Brazos Valley of Texas who have had personal health problems, have been forced out of their rural homes, have lost their jobs to people brought in from outside to work the oil and gas jobs, and even have observed flights of birds drop from the air, killed or disabled by the fumes from those local processing stations the gas companies try to hide back in the boonies. I can document these things.

Some of the negative effects of fracking are very well known and well documented. This destruction does not sit there on top of the BLM lands. Among these problems documented in regions of fracking, worldwide. Destruction of air, water and the almost completely unstudied underground biosystem are among them. Earthquakes that indicate unknown inds of damage to underground bio and geo systems.

Our air water and soil are the commons. They belong to the people – not to the gas or oil companies, and not to the BLM. Money is not more important than the common welfare, and a little more money now will not solve the human problem of depleting resources. In fact, it will make the problem worse for children who are born today, because we did not try to solve the real human problem, but only tried to do more of what caused the problem in the first place.

I am a basic career biologist – not a technician or a technologist. Regardless of the opinions of technicians and technologists, I and other basic scientists know that what we do to the earth today we can never undo. Before we do anything we should deeply consider what will be the effect on the future of humans in New Mexico and beyond, because the effects of this toxic technology are not only local. But expand far across the land air and water, and into the future.

I sincerely hope I will not need to sell out and move away from New Mexico as fracking continues, but I hesitate to invest further – to buy a property where I can live in winter – until I find out to what extent New Mexico is willing to protect her citizens and the natural wealth of her Biosystems from fly-by-night developers who bring temporary jobs, use up the infrastructure of the communities, and then sell off a portion gas and oil overseas and go away to feed off of the next community. It is the function of government to protect its citizens from these snake-oil salesmen who promise temporary riches rather than help to grow sustainable communities for the welfare of all the people.

I have purchased land here. Again, I hope this is a place where I can live healthy to the end of my days.



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